

critical programs in schools across my State, and I hope we find a way to fund them.

But I am forced to vote against this amendment because of another concern—my concern with mounting deficits.

The budget resolution brought before us includes tax cuts that total \$1.3 trillion. The budget also proposes that \$725 billion of these tax cuts be enacted immediately, under the reconciliation process.

Two years ago, we passed a \$1.3 trillion tax cut. I supported that tax cut. But those were different times. We had a surplus. We did not foresee the significant decline in revenues, or the deficits that followed.

This is not the time to reduce revenues by \$725 billion. It would hurt our budget and our economy.

Why is \$725 billion in tax cuts inappropriate at this time?

The most crucial problem is that it is not paid for. The budget resolution brought before us forecasts enormous deficits for almost the next decade. Reducing revenues by \$725 billion adds to the already mounting deficits.

In order to prevent the passage of tax cuts that would drive up the deficit and hurt our economy, I believe that we must reduce the size of this tax cut.

I joined three of my colleagues in a letter that laid out these concerns—we pledged that we would not agree to tax cuts above \$350 billion. This is crucial. The Budget Committee approved \$725 billion in tax cuts, and brought it to the Senate floor. Along with my colleagues, I promised to vote to bring this number down by \$375 billion.

In a narrowly divided Senate, it is important that both parties work together to come up with the appropriate spending and revenue targets for the budget. That is why I worked with both Democrats and Republicans. Together, we came up with a target of \$350 billion for this tax cut, and we agreed that we would all stick to that number.

As part of our commitment to try to reduce the size of the tax cut approved by the Budget Committee, we also agreed that we would not try to reduce the size of the tax cut below \$350 billion. That means I am forced to make difficult decisions. In order to keep my commitment to a more responsible tax cut, I have to vote against funding priorities like the one presented by Senator HARKIN.

During tough times, we must make tough choices. I chose to commit to a responsible tax cut. A tax cut that will prevent worsening deficits that would hurt our economy.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period for morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### LANCE CORPORAL JOSE GUTIERREZ

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a true hero—to one of the first Americans to have fallen in combat in Iraq and make the ultimate sacrifice. His name: Jose Gutierrez, a lance corporal in the United States Marine Corps. He was just 22 years old.

Corporal Gutierrez arrived in the United States when he was a 16 year old orphan, having left poverty-stricken circumstances in Guatemala City and a country racked by a brutal civil war.

He traveled over 2,000 miles by foot, north through Mexico, in search of a better life here in the United States.

Like so many immigrants, his past was soon eclipsed by his new life as an American. He was taken in by the Mosquera family of Lomita, CA. Nora and Max Mosquera had begun helping immigrant foster children when their own children had grown.

"He joined the Marines to pay back a little of what he'd gotten from the U.S.," Max Mosquera said. "For him it was a question of honor."

A tall and quiet young man who enjoyed soccer and chess, Jose learned English quickly and had plans to study architecture.

He became an infantry rifleman with the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment. He enlisted exactly 1 year ago, on March 25, 2002, and arrived at Camp Pendleton, CA, in early September.

Corporal Gutierrez died in battle, around 4 a.m. on Friday. He was struck by enemy fire while fighting alongside fellow marines near the southern Iraqi port city of Umm al Qasr.

"He was such a good kid," remembered Robert Nobles, a physical education teacher at North High in Torrance, where Corporal Gutierrez graduated in 2000.

I have been told that news of his death has resonated throughout Guatemala. Every major newspaper, radio and TV station carried his story. He has been portrayed as a brave and selfless young man—which he most certainly was.

I have also heard that it has been difficult to locate his one blood relative, his sister, who still lives in poverty in Guatemala City. The sister is arranging to have his body sent back to Guatemala, whereas a social worker in Los Angeles, Wendy Perlera, an acquaintance of Corporal Gutierrez, wants to bring his body back to L.A.

Wherever Lance Corporal Jose Gutierrez is finally laid to rest—in the country of his birth or the country which he was willing to give his life for—he will not be forgotten.

Our thought and our prayers are with his family—with his sister in Guatemala and with the Mosquera family, who provided him with the emotional and financial support to pursue his dreams.

The fact that he died so young—just 22—is tragic. Indeed, the loss of any

young life is a tragedy. The fact that he was willing to fight—and die—for his adopted homeland, has earned him the lasting admiration of Americans everywhere.

#### LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. In the last Congress Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred December 8, 2001, in Valencia, CA. A Sikh liquor store shopkeeper was severely beaten by two men. The men first entered the store and asked the victim, "Are you Osama bin Laden?" He tried to explain that he was a Sikh and had no association with Bin Laden. The men struck him repeatedly with metal poles, causing serious head injuries. The shopkeeper managed to escape his attackers after pushing a shelf over on top of them, knocking them down.

I believe that Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

#### GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I rise today to support the designation of March 25, 2003, as Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy.

As in previous years, I welcome the opportunity to honor the democratic values and lasting friendship that bind our nations. Our common struggle to protect freedom and democracy at home and around the world has forged a strong partnership between Greece and the United States, a partnership which is critical to meeting today's challenges.

On the international front, Greece has played an important role in Operation Enduring Freedom and is now working with its European Union partners to support the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Greece continues to be a leader in bringing stability to the Balkans and in guiding the countries of this former region of conflict toward the community of democracies in Europe. Greece has been a steadfast ally in the fight against international terrorism, responding to every request for assistance in tracking and disrupting terrorist networks.

Greece has been actively pursuing security on the home front as well. In the last year, we welcomed the arrest in